

China's National Dictionary Compilation and Publication Plans: Towards a "Lexicographical Great Power"?

In recent years, several Chinese scholars have argued that China has embarked on a path towards becoming a "lexicographical great power" (*cishu qiangguo* 辞书强国) (Wei 2015; Wang et al. 2014). In the history of the People's Republic of China, the country's political leadership has always attached great importance to the lexicographical sector and to the role of dictionaries within politics and society. Since the 1970s, the Chinese leadership has launched three national plans for the compilation and publication of dictionaries (1975-1985; 1988-2000; 2013-2025) (Wei 2015). These plans have been explicitly intended to boost lexicographical activities and publications in the country, as well as to improve the quality of Chinese lexicographical works.

By also relying on institutional documents, this paper aims to present the evolution of the three national plans, focusing on the relationship between lexicographical activities, politics, and ideology (Wierzbicka 1995). Moreover, the paper discusses the concept of "lexicographical great power" and its characteristics, as conceived by contemporary Chinese scholars.

References

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